MARVEL COMICS
THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMICS!
EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES
the AVENGERS
AUG
#10
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EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES

AVENGERS

They are the world's greatest heroes: America's super-soldier, reborn from the ashes of World War II; an immortal thunder god from the golden halls of Asgard; a modern-day knight clad in futuristic armor of his own design; a young woman whose mutant power to affect probability causes some to see her as a witch; an archer whose unerring eye is matched only by the strength of his arms; a brilliant scientist and his one true love, each endowed with the abilities of the smallest of Earth's creatures, the insects; and a hybrid who embodies the finest and most ferocious aspects of the feline species. Together, they stand allied against the threats that none of them can face alone; together, they are much, much more than merely the sum of their parts. They are Earth's Mightiest Heroes—The Avengers!

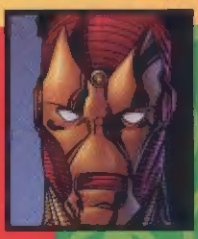
CAPTAIN AMERICA

The Avengers' moral compass as well as their field leader, *Captain America* has recently been awakened from a decades-long dream to return to the service of his country once again. Originally our greatest fighting man against the Axis forces in WWII, *Cap* now stands vigilant guardian against the evils that plague modern America, while seeking to find his own place in society as *Steve Rogers*.

THOR

The god of thunder, *Thor* is the immortal son of Odin, chief sky god as worshipped by the Vikings. Departing from his home in hallowed Asgard, *Thor* has sworn to protect the inhabitants of Midgard (Earth) from all who would seek to do them harm. By his side he carries the indestructible enchanted hammer, *Mjolnir*, one of the most powerful weapons in the universe.

IRON MAN



Brilliant and fabulously wealthy inventor *Tony Stark* is both the Avengers' chief source of financial support, and also secretly one of their most powerful members. When a near-fatal accident forced *Stark* to don an experimental life-preserving armor of his own design, he chose to take advantage of the fateful occurrence by using the armor to fight for good as the invincible *Iron Man*.

SCARLET WITCH

The mysterious young woman known only as *Wanda* was abandoned as a child and later found and raised by the so-called witch, Agatha Harkness. While her abilities may themselves seem like witchcraft to some, in truth they are the expression of her mutant ability to psionically affect probability, manifested by her "hexes". She continues to hone her abilities in the Avengers as the *Scarlet Witch*.

HAWKEYE

A master archer as well as an accomplished acrobat, *Clint Barton* felt that his talents were wasted on a burgeoning career in the circus and chose instead the life of an adventurer. Cocky and independent, he has always felt that the mantle of leadership in the Avengers would fit his shoulders rather better than it fits anyone else's.

ANT-MAN

Genius scientist *Hank Pym*, researcher in the field of microbiotics, created an incredible Micron gas whose unique properties caused items that it affected to shrink in size. In an attempt to repair the android Avenger known as the *Vision*, *Pym* himself became the first subject of the use of Micron gas on a living being. *Pym* later joined the ranks of the Avengers as the astonishing *Ant-Man*.

PREVIOUSLY IN AVENGERS

The evil trickster and god of lies, Loki—also half-brother to the mighty Thor—has set in a motion a scheme to beset the Avengers with attacks from all sides, in the hopes that he might finally defeat them, and in doing so, absorb their life energies to boost his own.

But when Ant-Man, deep inside the internal systems of the android Vision, discovered that the Vision's memory core was being drawn upon for information as to the Avengers' greatest villains, he shut his android creation down—unknowingly severing Loki's link to the data and therefore preventing him from further using it against the Avengers.

However, Loki persisted, his efforts now directed toward turning the Avengers' own members against the team; although he failed to entice the Scarlet Witch, he succeeded with Hellcat.

Meanwhile, the Avengers learned that the Gamma Core powering Avengers Island, previously thought to have been shut down, had somehow become active again—and even more inexplicable was the arrival from its heart of a completely different, but somehow familiar, Thor!

THE FURIOUS ELEMENTS THEMSELVES WELCOME THE FALLEN WARRIOR!
BY THE POWER OF MJOLNIR, LET THE STORMS OF ENERGY BE STILLED!
SCHREOOOOW
Uhh... THIS LOOKS LIKE MORE THAN YOU GUYS CAN HANDLE! GET BEHIND ME!
IRON MAN! WAIT! THERE'S SOMETHING FAMILIAR... ALMOST NATURAL...
THOR? IS IT REALLY YOU?
CAPTAIN AMERICA? WELL MET IN VALHALLA INDEED!
YOU... KNOW US?
AND SHOULD I NOT KNOW MY BOON COMPANIONS OF YORE... THE MIGHTY AVENGERS THEMSELVES?
GREAT IS ODIN'S MERCY THAT HE WOULD SANCTION OUR FELLOWSHIP HERE TILL THE END OF DAYS.
THOUGH IN TRUTH, IRON MAN, THY GARB IS SOMEWHAT ALTERED.
IT IS?
"GARB"? NOTHING! CHECK OUT THOSE PECS!

AND YOURS, OLD FRIEND? I VAGUELY RECALL A BARE CHEST... OR CHAINS... OR...
I TOO SENSE... A DIFFERENCE, CAPTAIN.
YET I FEEL RENEWED!
MORE ALIVE THAN I HAVE FELT IN A LONG, LONG TIME!
NOT ALL OF HELA'S MINIONS COULD STAND AGAINST ME AT THIS MOMENT!
BRING ON THE EINHERJAR* AND LET THE JOYOUS EVERLASTING BATTLE BEGIN!
* WARRIORS OF VAHALLA --Rachelle
Um, ACTUALLY, THOR... I DON'T THINK THIS IS VALHALLA.
HOW COULD IT BE OTHERWISE? I HAVE DIM MEMORIES OF A GREAT BATTLE...
...OF HEROIC SACRIFICE... OF A FINAL ENDING. 'TIS THAT NOT THE VERY GATEWAY TO THE BLESSED REALM?
COULD BE. BUT RIGHT NOW, WE'RE ON AVENGERS ISLAND OFF THE COAST OF MANHATTAN...
...INSIDE THE REACTOR CONTAINMENT BUILDING.
A NUCLEAR REACTOR? OFF THE SHORES OF MANHATTAN?
BUT... SUCH A THING IS FOLLY BEYOND RECKONING!
I'M INCLINED TO AGREE WITH YOU...
...BUT WE SEEM SURROUNDED BY RIDDLES...
...AND THE REACTOR FROM WHICH YOU STEPPED ONLY A MOMENT AGO IS ONE OF THE KEYS, I'M SURE OF IT!
"IT'S QUIET AGAIN... BUT DEAD? OR MERELY DORMANT?
"I HAVE AN IDEA WHERE WE MIGHT FIND THE ANSWERS WE NEED!"

RIVERSIDE PARK BESIDE THE HUDSON...
I CAN'T BELIEVE CAP IS STILL IN CHARGE OF THE AVENGERS! THOR'S QUIT, THE SCARLET WITCH IS GONE...
...THE SWORDSMAN'S VANISHED!
AT THIS RATE, IN ANOTHER WEEK, WE WON'T EVEN BE ABLE TO FIELD AN ENTIRE TEAM!
THEN... MAYHAP IT IS TIME TO JOIN A NEW TEAM.
MY TEAM.
YOU! THE ONE THOR CALLED LOKI!*
YOU'RE ONE OF THE BAD GUYS!
I MAY NOT BE CRAZY ABOUT CAPTAIN AMERICA, BUT LEAVING THE AVENGERS? FORGET IT!
AND WHO'S ON THIS "TEAM" OF YOURS ANYWAY?
*BACK IN AVENGERS MR #1 -- Rachelle
SOME OLD FRIENDS.
I BELIEVE YOU ALREADY KNOW THE SCARLET WITCH.
HI, HAWKEYE. YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT SIGNING UP.
YOU CAN BE THE LEADER.
I'M JUST WILD ABOUT LEADERS!

WANDA?
BUT... YOU ATTACKED US THE LAST TIME WE SAW YOU!
Ah. THAT WAS THEN.
THIS IS NOW.
MEET THE NEW SCARLET WITCH! THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW... MODIFICATIONS.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I'LL BE GLAD TO FILL YOU IN. PERSONALLY.
I HAVE SOME PRESSING APPOINTMENTS. WHY DON'T YOU TWO CONTINUE TO STROLL ALONG THE RIVER...
...AND GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER?
I'LL BE AROUND.
NOW WAIT A MINUTE!
COME ON, HANDSOME. I DON'T BITE... UNLESS IT'S ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY!

THE REACTOR'S DEAD AS A DOORNAIL RIGHT NOW, REED, BUT HOW COULD IT HAVE REACTIVATED ITSELF?
WE THOUGHT WE DESTROYED THE CORE, CAP. BUT THE NONRADIOACTIVE NATURE OF THIS NEW ENERGY...
...PLUS ITS SHEER MAGNITUDE...
...SUGGEST THAT AVENGERS ISLAND MAY HOUSE SOMETHING ENTIRELY UNIQUE IN OUR EXPERIENCE...
...A DIMENSIONAL RIP IN THE SPACE-TIME FABRIC OF THE VERY UNIVERSE...
...MANIFESTING ITSELF AS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL AND DANGEROUS CREATIONS ON EARTH... A NUCLEAR REACTOR!
AND JUDGING FROM THE IMAGES WE SAW THERE...
...IT MAY HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTING TO GIVE BIRTH... TO A TRIO OF THE AVENGERS' MOST DANGEROUS FOES!
SO SOME OF US MAY BE REAL AND SOME OF US MAY BE MANUFACTURED?
OH, WE'RE ALL REAL ENOUGH. BUT I'M BEGINNING TO SUSPECT THAT WE COME FROM DIFFERENT NEIGHBORHOODS.
THE "REACTOR" MAY BE A DIMENSIONAL BRIDGE... OR EVEN A WHITE HOLE.
BUT WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S BUILT RIGHT INTO THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF THIS UNIVERSE!
WHICH IS WHY NONE OF US, UNTIL NOW, EVEN QUESTIONED THE WISDOM OF HAVING A NUCLEAR REACTOR SO NEAR TO MANHATTAN!
BUT THE MAN WHO KNOWS THAT REACTOR INSIDE AND OUT, BRUCE BANNER, IS MISSING.
AND WITHOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE, WE'RE SITTING ON A TIME BOMB!

AT THAT MOMENT, SOMEWHERE ELSE...
WELCOME, BROTHER.
STUFF THY WELCOME! I AM BACK BUT A SHORT WHILE AND BORED TO DEATH ALREADY! THE AVENGERS BE SO DULLETH! NO REAVING, NO KILLING, NO PLUNDERING, NO WENCHING!
I AM MINDED TO KILL THEE JUST FOR FUN! BUT THE ENCHANTRESS HATH TOLD ME THOU HAST PLANS TO ALTER THIS STATE OF AFFAIRS!
INDEED I DO, THOR! I PROPOSE TO REESTABLISH THE RULE OF THE ASGARDIANS ON EARTH...
...EMBELLISHED IN THE FINEST VIKING TRADITION!
REAVING, KILLING, PLUNDERING, WENCHING... ALL OBLIGATORY PARTS OF THE PROGRAM, OF COURSE!
SURELY THE THUNDER GOD MUST BE A PART OF THAT PLAN.
BUT YOU BE UNTRUSTWORTHY!
DEAR BROTHER, YOU ALWAYS SEE THROUGH MY LITTLE SCHEMES!
OF COURSE I'M UNTRUSTWORTHY! I AM LOKI!
BUT WE WILL STRIKE A BARGAIN.
IF I HAVE LIED TO YOU...
...YOU MAY CRUSH MY SKULL WITH YOUR MIGHTY HAMMER! YOU HAVE MY WORD!
TO MINE MIND, THAT DOTH SOUNDETH GOOD!
MAYHAP THOR SHALL CELEBRATE BY REAVING SOME SMALL MEASURE.
THERE ARE STILL A FEW ODDS AND ENDS TO TAKE CARE OF.
WHY NOT GO WITH THE ENCHANTRESS AND CELEBRATE IN SOME OTHER WAY. REAVING CAN WAIT.
Hmmmm! SO BE IT!

SOMEWHERE ABOVE THE ANDES MOUNTAINS OF PERU...
WE HAVE VISUAL ACQUISITION, COLONEL FURY! KANG'S STARSHIP JUST AHEAD.
AWRIGHT! BUCKLE UP, YA YAHOOS!
AN' REMEMBER. NOBODY OPENS FIRE WITHOUT MY SAY SO.
MY GOD! LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT THING!
WHAT WUZ THAT, MISTER? I DIDN'T HEAR YOU!
I SAID I'M READY TO GO, COLONEL!
THAT'S WHUT I THOUGHT!
COURSE AND SPEED MATCH ACCOMPLISHED. INITIATE DOCKING.
AKKKREANG
SSSST
"HULL BREACH COMPLETE!"
LET'S GO!
NEGATIVE SENSOR READINGS, SIR! SHIP APPEARS TO BE EMPTY.
I DON'T LIKE IT.
KANG WAS A MAIN GUY. ANYBODY WHO COULD FRY HIS BACON'LL BE REAL TROUBLE FOR US!
WHAT DO --?
COLONEL! I'VE ACCESSED THE SHIP'S VISUAL RECORDS!

THE MOST RECENT ENTRY WAS A FEW DAYS AGO.
GOOD WORK. CAN YOU PULL IT UP ON SCREEN?
ROGER THAT.
I'M DISCORPORATING! I MUST ATTACK! REVERSE THE PROCESS WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME!
I AM SORRY, MY LORD, BUT REGRETTABLY, YOUR TIME IS UP.
*The complete story was in AVENGERS #8 -- Rachelle
GEEZ! THAT GUY JUST TOASTED KANG!
AND DIDN'T EVEN WORK UP A SWEAT!
"WHO WAS THAT GUY, COLONEL!"
"TROUBLE. NAME OF LOKI!
"SEARCH THE REST OF THE SHIP WITH A FINE-TOOTHED COMB.
"I WANT A FULL [redacted] AT 0200 HOURS!"
"WHERE'RE YOU GOING, COLONEL?"
"THERE'RE SOME FOLKS THAT OUGHT TO KNOW ABOUT THIS...
"...AND I AIM TO DELIVER THE NEWS PERSONALLY."

STARK MANSION...
...THE MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM...
[redacted] MAY HAVE A TIE-IN TO [redacted] REACTOR PROBLEM INVOLVING THE VISION.
AN ENERGY CHANNEL ACCESSED HIS MEMORY CORE WHILE HE WAS INOPERATIVE...
...AND WAS [redacted] COMPLETE DESCRIPTIONS OF AVENGERS' VILLAINS WE FOUGHT [redacted] IT, LIKE THE IMAGES [redacted] SAW IN [redacted] REACTOR.
I DON'T [redacted] HOW IT WAS DONE. THE VISION'S MEMORY [redacted] ENCRYPTED.
ONCE I SHUT HIM DOWN, WITHOUT THE CORE TO CHANNEL [redacted] INTO HIM, HIS SYSTEMS OVERLOADED AND HE BLEW UP.
I SUSPECT COLONEL FURY THINKS I [redacted] HIM DELIBERATELY.
I MIGHT HAVE, BUT MEBBE I'LL RETHINK MY POSITION.
COLONEL!
THE DOOR WAS OPEN. IN FACT, ALMOST EVERY ROOM IN THE JOINT IS OPEN.
THE NEW MASTERS OF EVIL DID SOME REDECORATING BEFORE WE COULD STOP THEM.
WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU, COLONEL? I IMAGINE THIS ISN'T MERELY A [redacted] CALL.

DON'T GET SMART, PAL.
YOU MAY [redacted] A WALKING AMERICAN FLAG TA EVERYBODY ELSE...
...BUT [redacted] JUST ONE [redacted] BIG GUN WHO CAN'T BE AIMED TA ME!
THOU ART A GUEST IN THIS HOUSE AND I RESPECT THAT...
...BUT [redacted] AMERICA OF ALL MORTALS --
-- DOTH NOT MERIT THE DISRESPECT IMPLICIT IN THY VOICE.
YEEOWCH!
WHO IN BLAZES ARE YOU?
COLONEL FURY, MAY I PRESENT THOR, THE GOD OF THUNDER.
YEAH? WELL, YOU'D BETTER CHECK HIS I.D....
...'CAUSE THE GUY YOU PULLED OUT OF THE AMBER IS OVER IN A CHELSEA [redacted] TEARING UP [redacted] PLACE.*
I GOT THE REPORT JUST BEFORE I ARRIVED. N.Y.P.D.'S GOT THEIR HANDS FULL.
-- Rachelle.
[redacted] WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD [redacted] OF MY NAMESAKE IS TRUE, CAPTAIN...
...THE POLICE OF MIDGARD WILL [redacted]

SAVE MY SEAT.
HE GETS RIGHT TO THE POINT, DOESN'T HE? IS HE THE REAL GOD OF THUNDER?
ONLY TIME WILL TELL, COLONEL.
BUT I SUSPECT YOU HAVE MORE ON YOUR [illegible] THAN A [illegible] FIGHT.
NEXT YOU'LL [illegible] TELLIN' ME [illegible] A MIND [illegible] BUT [illegible] RIGHT.
CHECK OUT [illegible] VIDEO. IT AIN'T FROM BLOCKBUSTER. I TOLD YOU I'D LET YA KNOW WHEN WE FOUND KANG'S SHIP.
WE FOUND IT.
WE DIDN'T FIND KANG. OR MANTIS.
THIS IS WHY NOT.
MY HANDS!
THAT POOR THING! WHAT'S [illegible] TO HER?!
APPARENTLY HER [illegible] IS BEING ABSORBED BY HER [illegible]
HE LOOKS FAMILIAR.
HE SHOULD. HE APP[illegible] WHEN WE FOUND THE BARBARIAN THOR'S GRAVE!
HE'S LOKI, GOD OF LIES AND [illegible]
[illegible] MAY HAVE JUST FOUND ANTMAN'S ANSWER TO THE VISION PROBLEM!

YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT.
WANDA?
THE WITCH?
IN THE FLESH, BOYS.
NAIL HER BEFORE HER HEX POWER!
AT EASE, IRON MAN. SHE'S ON OUR SIDE.
WHAT?
WANDA'S MY SECRET WEAPON.
WHEN [redacted] WAS [redacted] BY THE [redacted] DISGUISED [redacted] MENTOR, [redacted] HARKNESS...*
AVENGERS HR 4 -- Rachelle
...SHE CONTRIVED TO LEAVE ME A MESSAGE...
...AND FOLLOWED THE ENCHANTRESS TO UNCOVER HER PLANS.
I'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT HER, BUT --
MMMMPF!
THERE WAS NO NEED TO WORRY, CAP.
YOU'RE MY LEADER...
WANDA?
...AND I'M JUST WILD ABOUT LEADERS.
OF COURSE, I'M NOT SURE THAT'S YOU ANY LONGER.
WHAT?
IN THE OLD DAYS, IT WAS CUSTOMARY FOR KNIGHTS TO DO BATTLE FOR A LADY'S HAND.

SHE MEANS IT'S TIME FOR THE OLD GUYS TO STEP ASIDE!
URKK!
SKRAKKT
HAWKEYE! NO!
HRRAHT
HEADS UP, CAP! I GOT ME A NEW BOW, SOME NEW ARROWS...
...AND A WHOLE NEW 'TUDE!
RIGHT INTO MY BLAST!
DUCK, JAN!
OHH!
I FOUND I LIKED THE BAD GUYS SO MUCH, I DECIDED TO SWITCH!
I KNOW YOU GOT FANCY EQUIPMENT, TRAITOR...
...BUT YOU'RE ABOUT TO MAKE HISTORY!

[redacted] WELL [redacted] BEEN RIGHT, [redacted] MAN...
...BUT HAWKEYE HATH NEW FRIENDS...
KRANG
...AND 'TIS THEE WHOM ARE TO BECOME HISTORY!
THOR! YOU'RE [redacted] BE IN [redacted]!
THE WENCHING IS OVER! 'TIS TIME FOR REAVING!
HANK! COME ON! [redacted] CAN [redacted] BLAST!
I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU.
SURELY, HANK PYM, YOU'D [redacted] LEAVE [redacted] FOR [redacted] WOMAN?
WHAT? WHO?
I AM CALLED THE ENCHANTRESS...
I—
... AND I AM THE DREAM OF EVERY MORTAL MAN.
...NO... I...
SO LOSE YOURSELF IN MY KISS...
...AND DREAM OF ME.
...ahhh...

WANDA! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE DOING THIS!
FORGET HER, WANDA! TALK ABOUT YOUR LAME-O/D POWERS!
FTAPP!
OWW! HOLD STILL FOR ONE SECOND AND WE'LL TALK ABOUT IT!
THIS IS ALMOST TOO EASY!
SPRAKKT
UGH!
PTHUTH
THEN LET'S MAKE IT HARDER!
I KNEW YOU WERE RECKLESS, HAWKEYE...
UGH
I THOUGHT YOU WERE OUT!
THAT WAS [redacted] FIRST MISTAKE!
SHOOTING ME IN THE BACK WAS YOUR SECOND!
...BUT I NEVER BELIEVED YOU'D TURN AGAINST US!
NOW WITHOUT THAT BOW, WE'LL FIGHT ON MY TERMS!
SAY WHAT YOU WILL, OLD MAN! WHEN WE'RE DONE, I'LL BE CHAMP!
[redacted] UP, IRON MAN, AND FIGHT! [redacted]KE THY WARRIOR SPIRIT!
YOU WANT TOUGH? CHEW SOME REPULSOR RAYS, WINGHEAD!
BRAAP
UHH! HAMMER REFLECTED MY BLAST RIGHT BACK AT ME!

I'LL HAVE TO PUMP EVERYTHING INTO ONE SHOT!
BLAST RIGHT [redacted] HIS PROTECTION!
SKREEOOWW
AARRGH!
THANG
NOW, IRON MAN! PREPARE FOR THY JOURNEY TO HEL!

WHAT?
THRAMM
MINE HAMMER THRUST ASIDE BY...
...ANOTHER HAMMER!
THIS BE IMPOSSIBLE!
YOU SPEAK STRANGELY, WARRIOR ...
...AS THOUGH THY TONGUE WERE TWISTED IN KNOTS!
BUT WHATEVER THE MANNER OF THY SPEECH, FOR SHAME THAT AN SCION OF THUNDE SHOULD PLAGU MORTALS!
I WAS TOO LAT TO SAVE THE ESTABLISHMEN IN CHELSEA...
...BUT THIS ENDS HERE AND NOW!
THY POWER SEEMS TO MATCH MINE OWN...
...BUT THERE BE BUT ONE GOD OF THUNDER!
HAVE AT THEE...
...AND LET THE VANQUISHE LIETH AT HELA'S IN THE KINGDOM THE DEAD!

[illegible] NAILED CAP WITH A HEX BLAST...
...BUT IT LOOKS LIKE OUR GOD GUY COULD USE SOME HELP!
[illegible] LOKI'S SUPER-JOLT [illegible] MAY DO [illegible] TRICK!
THE ONLY TRICK, HAWKEYE, IS THAT I'VE RECOVERED, YOUR [illegible] OVER!
SNAP
BUT WHATEVER THE MANNER OF THY SPEECH, FOR SHAME THAT ANY SCION OF THUNDER SHOULD PLAGUE MORTALS!
I WAS TOO LATE TO [illegible] THE ESTABLISHMENT IN CHELSEA...
...BUT THIS ENDS HERE AND NOW!
THY POWER SEEMS TO MATCH MINE OWN...
...BUT THERE BE BUT ONE GOD OF THUNDER!
HAVE AT THEE...
...AND LET [illegible] VANQUISHED LIETH AT HELA'S FEET IN THE [illegible] DEAD!

UNBELIEVABLE!
THAT ANY SINGLE UNIVERSE WOULD BE LARGE ENOUGH TO CONTAIN TWO SUCH THUNDERING DUNDERHEADS!
I PLANNED TO DEFEAT THE AVENGERS AND CONSUME THEIR LIFE ENERGIES AS I HAVE DONE WITH THEIR FOES!
MY SUBTLE MAGIC HATH TURNED HAWKEYE TO MY SIDE...
...AND ONCE I PLACED HELLCAT'S SOUL WITHIN THE BODY OF THE TREACHEROUS SCARLET WITCH...
...SHE TOO WAS MINE!
YET THE BALANCE OF POWER IS PRECARIOUSLY ALTERED NOW...
...AND ONLY [redacted] LIGHTNING STROKE MAY YET [redacted] VICTORY [redacted] POTENTIAL DEFEAT!
I HAD HOPED TO BE STILL MORE POWERFUL WHEN I ATTEMPTED TO TAKE THE ENERGY FROM ITS SOURCE...
...BUT THIS NEW THOR FORCES MY HAND!
HERE ON AVENGERS ISLAND, I MUST DO WHAT I HAVE NOT DARED TO DO BEFORE...
...RIP OPEN THE REACTOR...
...AND CONSUME THE ENERGY DIRECTLY!
AND IF I PAY FOR MY AMBITION WITH MY LIFE...
...SO BE IT!
SKKREEACTT

AHHH! MY BODY IS ON FIRE!
BURNING!
BUT... I FEEL... THE FURY!
GROWING! INFUSING MY ENTIRE BEING! GIVING ME POWER BEYOND MEASURE!
AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, I HAVE WON! YES!
THE AGE OF LOKI HATH BEGUN!
NEXT
SHADOW VICTORY!
OUR HEROES TAKE ON THEIR MOST POWERFUL FOE AND DISCOVER...
...THAT EVEN AVENGERS CAN

OPERATION
ZERO TOLERANCE
FOR THE SAKE OF ALL HUMANITY,
THE X-MEN'S DAYS ARE NUMBERED
AND THIS JUNE, THEIR NUMBER'S UP
IN THE PAGES OF X-MEN, UNCANNY X-MEN, WOLVERINE & CABLE.
MARVEL COMICS
ALL NEW AND ALL DIFFERENT FROM THE HOUSE OF IDEAS

#
MAVERICK
WHEN YOU'RE DYING OF THE LEGACY VIRUS, EVERY OPERATION IS A SUICIDE MISSION!
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JORGE GONZALEZ • JIMMY CHEUNG
1993

BULLPEN

AVAILABLE JUNE 18

HEROES FOR HIRE

The action's a-poppin' and the furniture's a-shatterin' as IRON FIST and the boys take on the cold 'n' deadly NITRO, the Exploding Man! Plus, the BLACK KNIGHT receives a present that may determine his future! LUKE CAGE can't be there to help him open it, though, 'cause he's busy trying to shake the bad guys who were after his booty last issue! By JOHN OSTRANDER and PASCUAL FERRY!

*2

INCREDIBLE HULK

WOLVERINE drags an unconscious HULK into the X-MANSION, where he wakes up and begins bashing his way out. Hey, when you're that strong, why use something conventional as a door? By PETER DAVID and ADAM KUBERT!

*455

IRON MAN

Freshly escaped from the clutches of the evil MANDARIN, IRON MAN forms a tenuous alliance with the HULK in order to face an unimaginably horrifying enemy! Talk about your original odd couple! By JEPH LOEB and WHILCE PORTACIO!

*10

THUNDERBOLTS

Our "heroes" face the possibility of being squashed like grapes by the aptly named GROWING MAN! Sent by HYDRA's brutal BARON STRUCKER to waste the T-Bolts, GM wastes no time in getting down to what he does best: getting bigger and getting badder! By KURT BUSIEK and MARK BAGLEY!

*5

PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN

A milestone, double-sized extravaganza! Our friendly neighborhood SPIDER-MAN, with the help of X-MAN, faces the revamped, enhanced, power-packed ELECTRO! Will their combined efforts be enough to save Manhattan?! By TOM DeFALCO and STEVE SKROCE!

*82

WHAT IF?

This month's purrfectly powerful ish stars the sleek 'n' sexy BLACK CAT! Find out what would've happened if the ferociously feline FELICIA HARDY had tried to spruce up SPIDER-MAN's public image... and wound up being forced to unmask him! BY LYSA MARIE HAWKINS and ERIC BATTLE!

*99

PSYLOCKE AND ARCHANGEL: CRIMSON DAWN

The X-MEN's PSYLOCKE just got a new body, courtesy of the CRIMSON DAWN, and her compatriot, ARCHANGEL, has got his wings back! The sparks may not be flying in this couple's romance, but they're both in grave danger of being burned by an all-new malevolent force! By BEN RAAB and SALVADOR LARROCA!

*1 of 4

EXCALIBUR

Before she was SHADOWCAT, she was KITTY PRYDE! Now the mutant minx must face an enemy thought dead since her days with WOLVERINE! Also featuring the rollicking return of RORY CAMPBELL — the man who might become AHAB! By BEN RAAB and ROBERT TERANISHI!

*111

X-MAN

Still recovering from the effects of poisonous gas, NATE returns to the mean streets of the Big Apple, where he meets three mysterious teen-aged girls! By TERRY KAVANAGH and ROGER CRUZ!

*29

X-MEN

"ZERO TOLERANCE" continues! BASTION's war on mutants continues to rage — even at the cost of innocent human lives! The ICEMAN cometh to a city hospital to save one of those lives in particular — that of young medical internist CECILIA REYES! By SCOTT LOBDELL and CARLOS PACHECO!

*66

STAR TREK: STARFLEET ACADEMY

EDAM ASTRUN receives a telepathic message that leads him and the rest of OMEGA SQUAD to the forbidden planet of TALOS IV, where they find the JEM'HADAR amassing! Can they warn Starfleet of this terrible threat without facing the death penalty? Maybe CAPTAIN PIKE can help! By CHRIS COOPER and CHRIS RENAUD!

*9

MARVEL ONLINE (available JUNE 19)

SPIDER-MAN CYBERCOMIC

*49

SPIDER-MAN moves to stop DEATHLOK from changing the course of history! Is it the right move for the webhead to be making, or is he in way over his head – again?! By SCOTT LOBDELL, MINDY NEWELL, NGHIA LAM and ATOMIC PAINTBRUSH!

Hey, gang! We just want to mention that the response to our recent BULLPEN BULLETINS READERS' POLL has been *tremendous! Staggering! Overwhelming!* We have to thank everyone who participated, and all who continue to send in your entries! We're working on tallying up all the responses now, and we'll run the results soon! But just so you know — the polls are now ***closed.*** Thanks again!

ITEM! So you've undoubtedly read last week's shipment of Marvel comics, along with the edition of Bullpen Bulletins contained therein *(shame* on you if you haven't)! You've noticed something *different* about the books, plus there's the fact that we announced that we'd give you the lowdown on Marvel's newest and greatest feature this week! So, now it's time for us to put up or shut up!

Well, starting this month, we've added what are called "gatefold covers" to all Marvel titles. When you open them up, you'll find a cast list, describing who each of the key characters are in whatever title you're reading, along with a recap of all the pertinent stuff that's been going on lately in the storylines! This is a step we're taking to make our books more accessible to newer readers, who may be coming in during the middle of a storyline and therefore a bit confused about what's going on! This will, we hope, let those readers catch up more quickly, and maybe even refresh the memories of longtime readers who forget some crucial details and events because they're so busy also following all of the *other* titles in our line! Who says this isn't the age of Reader-Friendliness? But we have to confess – this isn't *just* for you, Faithful Ones! It's for *us* too, since even we can't keep all the characters and continuity straight! Sheesh!

ITEM! Visitors to the Marvel offices on a recent spring afternoon were treated to an unusual sight — editors were running combs frantically through what's left of their hair, freelancers were walking around in clean clothes, and the floor of the infamous Marvel Bullpen was actually visible! No, Claudia Schiffer wasn't paying a visit — the gang got cleaned up to welcome *Wizard* magazine photographers who were on hand to chronicle the madness and mayhem that makes up a typical Marvel day!

Well, *almost* typical! Artists and writers from around the country abandoned their drawing boards and laptops (okay, no one actually left a laptop behind) to attend one of the biweekly lunch time creative meetings held in Marvel's toy-filled conference room! The Dr. Pepper flowed like wine, and the pizza disappeared rapidly as such noted comic book luminaries as JOHN ROMITA, SR., JOHN ROMITA, JR., LARRY HAMA, and PETER DAVID discussed hot new storylines with the likes of ADAM KUBERT, ANDY KUBERT and ADAM POLLINA! And *Wizard* was there to capture it all on film!

Despite the presence of so many comic industry superstars, one of their ranks was mysteriously missing in action when *Wizard* began shooting photos of editorial

To check out our ever-awesome official Marvel website, for up-to-the-minute news and information on current and upcoming projects, go to the World Wide Web and type in:

www.marvel.com!

And if you're a subscriber to America Online and you want to check out Marvel Online for trivia, creator/artist chats, the Spider-Man CyberComic and lots more, just click on to "Keyword" and type in "Marvel"! If you're not a subscriber to America Online and would like to be, just call 1-800-338-6100!

BULLETINS

teams. SPIDER-MAN editor RALPH MACCHIO was nowhere to be found when it was the Spidey team's turn to be photographed! A thorough search revealed that he was not snoozing under his desk as usual, so the Spider-guys rustled up a life-sized cardboard Spidey figure and pasted Riotous Ralph's head upon it! So realistic was this — dare we say — "clone," that Ralph's faithful assistant MATT HICKS didn't notice his boss was missing until about three in the afternoon when he walked into the office and saw a bright-eyed "Ralph" sitting in his chair! "I knew something was wrong when I saw that Ralph's eyes were open," said Matt. "Three o'clock is his nap-time!"

If you want to see the now-fabled Ralph clone photo, catch a glimpse of the Kuberts duking it out for the same slice of extra-cheese, or get in on a lightsaber duel in the Bullpen, keep watching this space and we'll be sure to let you know when the Marvel Madness ish of *Wizard* hits the stands!

ITEM! While that mirthless mutant-hater BASTION wages OPERATION: ZERO TOLERANCE over in the X-books, two members of the X-MEN find that they have their *own* problems — and from another dimension, yet! PSYLOCKE AND ARCHANGEL: CRIMSON DAWN, the hot new four-issue limited series which debuts on the comic racks next week, finds the two X-patriots waging battle with an all-new menace who's behind the mysterious dimension known as the CRIMSON DAWN! And just 'cause we love ya, we're presenting a sneak peek at this new villain right here, and trust us, he's every bit as hard and jagged as he looks!

What's his beef with our heroes? Well, after being literally shredded by the savage SABRETOOTH, PSYLOCKE received a new body, courtesy of the Crimson Dawn. But of course, you *never* get something for nothing, and Psylocke is gonna find that there's a particularly terrible price for the gift she's received! To top it all off, ARCH-ANGEL has suddenly been granted the return of his original wings! How can these two deal with these startling physical changes, as well as the fact that their relationship has gone as sour as a basket of green apples? Will a battle for their lives reunite them — or tear them asunder forever?

Brought to you by the awesome EXCALIBUR team of BEN RAAB and SALVADOR LARROCA, this book is packed with more twists and turns than a Saturday night house party! If you've been following the Crimson Dawn storyline in EXCALIBUR, or if you just wanna be in on some eye-popping mutant history-in-the-making, PSYLOCKE AND ARCHANGEL: CRIMSON DAWN is the book you need to blister your brain!

MARVEL ONLINE CHAT SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK:

6/12/97 - Writer KURT BUSIEK & Editor TOM BREVOORT (THUNDERBOLTS) 9:30 PM - 10:30 PM EST

6/16/97 - Artist JOHN ROMITA, SR. (SPIDER-MAN, THE ART OF JOHN ROMITA) 8 PM - 9 PM EST

Kathy Probe (Overpower) 9 PM -10 PM EST

6/17/97 - Writer BEN RAAB (EXCALIBUR, CRIMSON DAWN) 8 PM - 9 PM EST

Writer/Asst. Editor GLENN GREENBERG (SPIDER-MAN CYBERCOMIC, SPIDER-MAN UNLIMITED) 9 PM - 10 PM EST

Please note that this is a TENTATIVE schedule. Keep checking MARVEL ONLINE for up-to-the-minute information!

STAN'S SOAPBOX!

Hi, Heroes!
Wow! We've finally found proof that someone actually *reads* our mellifluous mags! After asking you to send questions, I never expected such an overflowing flood of mail! All of Marveldom is awash in an insatiable quest for knowledge!

This week's lucky recipient of an all-purpose No-Prize is Dave Reaven from Philadelphia. Part of Dave's letter asks, *"Which series excited you the most while you were writing it?"*

Hey, Dave, wouldja believe I was excited by *every* series I wrote – that's why I wrote 'em! For me, the fun part was *living* each adventure. When Dr. Strange fought Nightmare, I was afraid to go to sleep. When Spidey swung from the rooftops, I got vertigo. When the Thing yelled, "It's clobbering time," I became hoarse! When the Hulk lifted a car, I got a backache! Fact is, I was excited by everything I wrote – even *Millie the Model* and *Fin Fang Foom!* But I'm easily excited; I get goosebumps just watching grass grow!

Another No-Prize winner is Jesse Garner from Woodbridge, NJ. *"How difficult was it for you to keep straight the expansive continuity of the Marvel Universe?"* asketh he. It was probably easier than for today's writers, because I had less super heroes to keep track of in the early 60's and, since I was head writer and editor, I didn't have to double-check with anyone. It must be a zillion times harder to keep track of everything today, which is why cowardly me is sticking to my little Soapboxes!

That's a wrap, culture lovers! Keep sending your lively letters, 'cause we're up to our earlobes in No-Prizes!

Excelsior!

Stan Lee

Send your querulous queries to:
STAN'S SOAPBOX
c/o BULLPEN BULLETINS
Marvel Comics
387 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016

The next nutty No-Prize might be ***yours****!*

THE SAGA OF QUICKSILVER

Where did I come from? Hard to answer, it's all a blur.

This is what I do know.
My name is Pietro Maximoff.
It was once Pietro Frank.
You've probably never seen me.

But in those moments when a breeze whispers past your ear, that's me. Or when a wind that comes out of nowhere disappears as quickly, that's also me. There's nowhere I can't be in the breadth of a second. I'm the fastest man there is.

Actually that's not true. I'm a mutant. And have no desire to be measured according to the standards of man. That's why I joined the Brotherhood Of Evil Mutants.

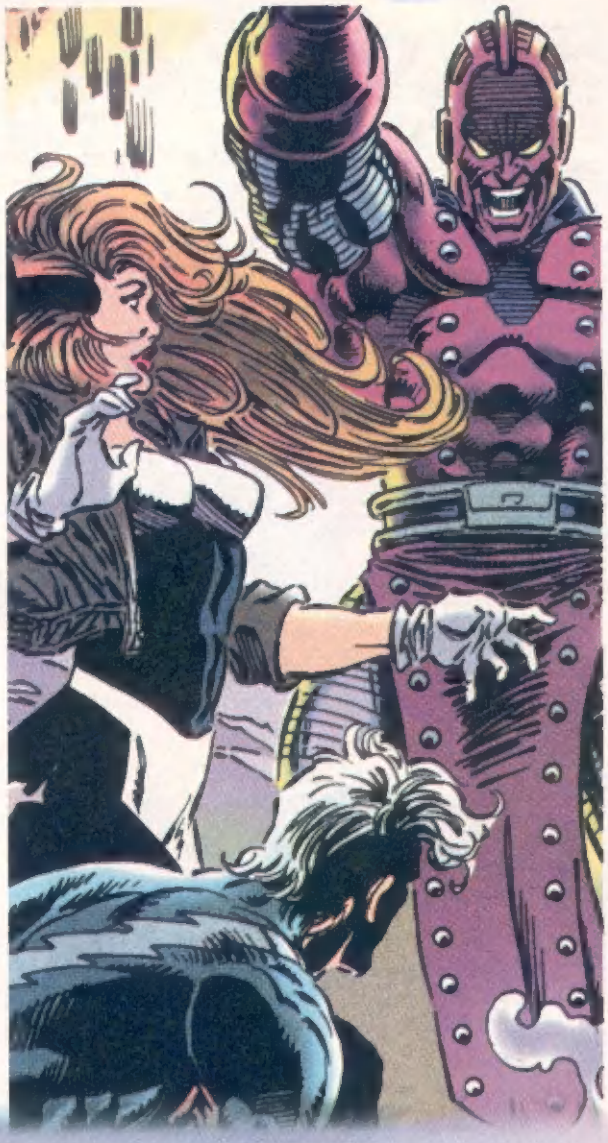
The part of being a member of the Brotherhood that bothered me was the word "Evil." The leader of the Brotherhood, Magneto, was a self-absorbed maniac.

I feared the longer I stayed with them, the more like him I'd become. I learned almost too late the dangers of allowing him to control my actions. And those of my sister, Wanda.

For someone who can move 175 miles per hour, I can be a little slow.

In time, we found ourselves allied with humans with amazing powers, as part of Earth's Mightiest Heroes–the Avengers. Wanda was called the Scarlet Witch.

I... Quicksilver.



The Avengers proved a good place for Wanda and me. Until her marriage. At the time I didn't know what she saw in the Vision. I had a lot to learn.

In a battle with the mutant-hunting Sentinels, I was wounded and forced, maybe for the first time, to stop running. And it was when I stopped running that I ran into Crystal, an Inhuman from a race much like mutants.

In time, we married. I quit the Avengers. And chose to live with the rest of the Inhumans in their secret city in the Himalayan Mountains.

But not for long. Soon, I was reunited with my sister and was forced to retrace our steps back to the place where we grew up... Wundagore Mountain.

Here we discovered that our mysterious past of being raised by Gypsies and being the son and daughter of certain Super Heroes from W.W.II was not so true. Here we discovered we'd been abandoned by a young mother trying to escape the tyranny of her husband. She died after we were born. The identity of our father, then, was a mystery.

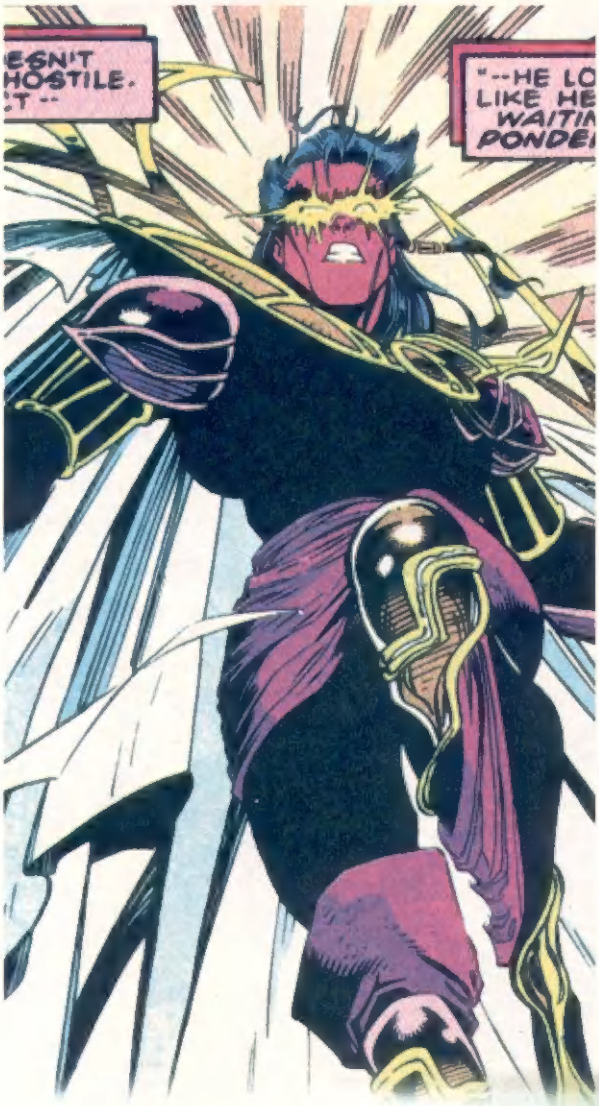
Even now, I sometimes wish we'd never learned the truth.

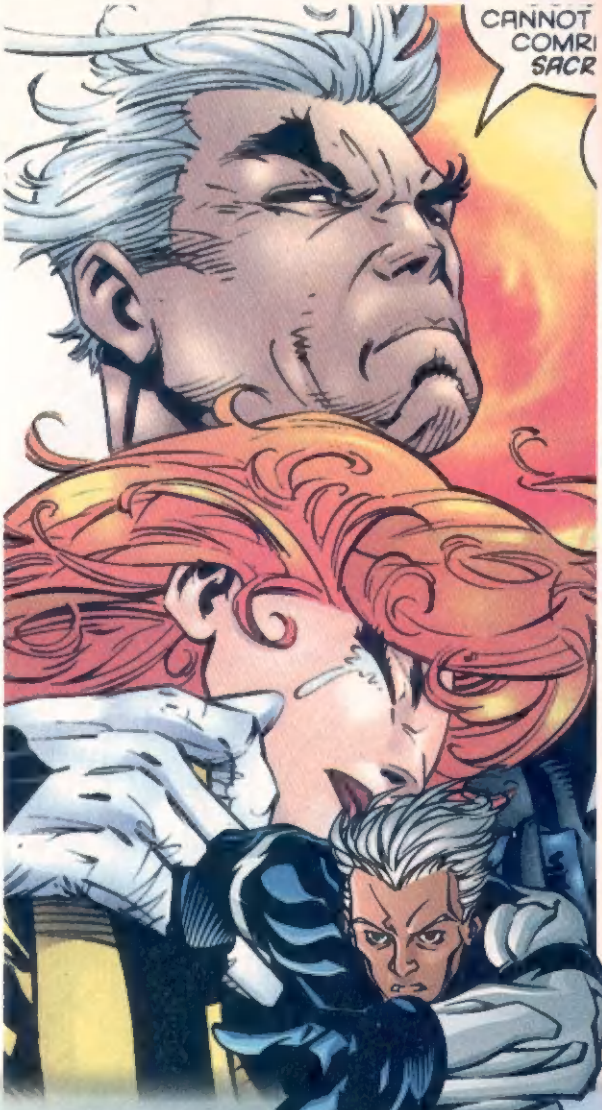
For in time, we learned his identity... Magneto.

I returned to Attilan. But the Himalayan Mountains were not to be our home for long. And on the night my first child was born, we found the entire city transported to the dark side of the moon.

In honor of the event, we named our child Luna. I was surprised to discover that the pairing of a mutant father with an Inhuman mother caused Luna to be born... human.

I was now part of the very race I'd spent my life running from.





We were a family. A family that had become part Inhuman. Part Mutant. Part Synthezoid. And Part Human. But peace would not be a part of the years to come. Religious zealots led by a mutant named Exodus expected me to fill the void my Father left behind him when he apparently died. I was expected to lead the war against humanity.

I said "no". And even though my father turned up alive, calling himself Joseph and fighting alongside the mutant group known as the X-Men, I had made an enemy in Exodus.

I know I will face him again. And alone. I lost both wife and sister to the being known as Onslaught. But I must put my feelings for them behind me.

I will not lose my daughter to Exodus, or anyone else who would use her against me.

I run alone, which may be for the best. After all, who could keep up with me?

QUICKSILVER

A new ongoing series coming soon from The House of Ideas